

APCM MAILING JANUARY 2024

Welcome!

A warm welcome to this new APCM briefing. It contains up-to-date guidance, information, dates, and news about events. Please feel free to share this with anybody you feel this might be relevant to and who might benefit.

MESSAGE FROM ARCHDEACON NICK SHUTT

Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6

When I received an email from Bishop Hugh which started "This is a massive, long shot..." I sat up and read it carefully. It came out of the blue with a request to help out because Archdeacon Paul Bryer was seriously ill. Sadly, Paul died shortly after I had started working three days a week in the diocese. I thought I had retired as an Archdeacon but what did I know! God is a God of surprises and it felt right to respond positively, and I have been grateful to everyone for their welcome, support and patience!

In times of great change and challenge it is sometimes difficult to hang onto the fact that we are in the business of building the kingdom of God – as opposed to our mini-fiefdoms – and I know how tirelessly I have seen everyone work for the kingdom in the short time I have been with you.

I have always valued this verse from the Psalms:

**Your word is a lamp to my feet
and a light to my path.**

Ps.119:105

It reminds me that God's Word shows me where I am – by pointing to my feet but also shows me the way to go – by lighting my path.

We are on the way to fruitfulness and sustainability and sometimes that involves making some paths straight.

So, continue to trust in the Lord, relying on his insights, acknowledging that it is his kingdom we are working towards and remembering the new commandment to love one another as God loves us.



**THE VEN NICK SHUTT
ARCHDEACON OF CORNWALL**



**DIOCESE
OF TRURO**

There are a number of links and email addresses in this document. If you do not have access to the internet please call us at Church House on 01872 274351 for more information or resources.

LET US KNOW WHAT HAS CHANGED FOR YOU

It is really important that we know who's who in terms of your parish officers to make sure the right information gets to the right people. This means that each year we ask PCC Secretaries to confirm the details of your parish officers by completing the Place Audit.

The Place Audit is sent out via email – so if you are the PCC Secretary and don't have an email address please let us know asap who we can send it to instead (name and email).

If you don't have a PCC Secretary (yet) let Lesley Fusher know.

An email about the Place Audit is sent out in March by Lesley Fusher, who will include helpful instructions in her message and is always happy to help with queries. You can email her at lesley.fusher@truro.anglican.org or call 01872 247219.

PARISH FACING SUPPORT SERVICE

We know that there is so much that you all do in your parishes, and in order for us to be as responsive to your needs as possible we have allocated a Deanery Liaison Advocate (DLA) for each deanery – a named contact who can help you access information and support.

The DLAs are existing staff who also

have other roles, and are connected with their colleagues across Church House, so can get answers to your questions quickly, signposting where necessary to the right person. You might find that you already know your DLA, but if not, please do get in touch – there is no such thing as a silly question and they are there to help.



ARCHDEACONRY OF BODMIN	ARCHDEACONRY OF BODMIN	ARCHDEACONRY OF CORNWALL	ARCHDEACONRY OF CORNWALL
East Wivelshire Sarah Welply	Trigg Major Rebecca Evans	Carnmarth North Mel Pomery	Penwith Sue Thorold
St Austell Daniel Mantell-Roberts	Trigg Major, Trigg Minor & Bodmin Rebecca Evans	Carnmarth South Sue Thorold	Powder Jenny Wreford
Stratton Sarah Welply	West Wivelshire Mandy Wells	Kerrier Mel Pomery	Pydar Rebecca St Ledger-Renfree

FREE PARISH TRAINING AVAILABLE

Each year we offer a range of training for parishes. The programme will be sent to you in the near future.

This year we are offering more sessions for deaneries to support them with their Deanery Plans but will also continue to offer sessions such as 'Being a PCC/ Churchwarden/

Treasurer, finance drop-ins and help filling in parish returns. We are always happy to receive requests for training and will offer what we can.

There are recordings and resources from previous training for Secretaries available [here](#).

TALKING SENSE ABOUT CHURCH ADMINISTRATION

Some of you may have joined John Truscott's minute taking training in 2022. He is a national expert on running churches.

John is a national expert on running churches. He has a wide range of helpful resources for people doing parish admin on his website [here](#). Examples including 'Advice for church administrators', 'Helpful handover documents', 'A beginners guide to IT security' and 'A church policies checklist'.

HOW TO RUN YOUR APCM FROM START TO FINISH

We are running a session called 'How to run your APCM from start to finish' twice to help you.

To book please click on the date:

7 February 10am-12pm (Zoom)
13 March 2pm – 4pm (Zoom)

PAPERWORK AND PERSONAL DATA

We know that PCC Secretaries may end up with a lot of paperwork and hold a lot of information, some of it sensitive personal data.

There are resources and guidance available on our website [here](#). The Church of England also has a handy guide covering what to do with the paperwork you hold; it is called Keep or Bin and can be found [here](#).

If you have a specific query Kate Cortez may be able to advise: kate.cortez@truro.anglican.org

Your PCC needs to be able to demonstrate it has considered data protection and you should have a privacy notice as a minimum. The above resources include a checklist and useful templates to ease the process.

VACANCY IN SEE: UPDATES AVAILABLE

The Vacancy in See process continues to find the next Bishop of Truro. You can keep up-to-date with what's going on via the diocesan website [here](#).

The next key date for your diary is a public consultation by [Zoom](#) on **February 6, 2024**.

The Likely date for any announcement will be January 2025 and it is hoped the new bishop will be welcomed around Spring 2025.

Cyber Security Small Charity Guide

This advice has been produced to help charities protect themselves from the most common cyber attacks. The 5 topics covered are easy to understand and cost little to implement. Read our quick tips below, or find out more at www.ncsc.gov.uk/charity.

Backing up your data

Take **regular** backups of your important data, and test they can be restored. This will reduce the inconvenience of any data loss from theft, fire, other physical damage, or ransomware.



Identify what needs to be backed up. Normally this will comprise documents, emails, contacts, legal information, calendars, financial records and supporter or beneficiary databases.



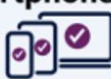
Ensure the device containing your backup is not permanently connected to the device holding the original copy, neither physically nor over a local network.



Consider backing up to the cloud. This means your data is stored in a separate location (away from your offices/devices), and you'll also be able to access it quickly, from anywhere.

Keeping your smartphones (and tablets) safe

Smartphones and tablets (which are used outside the safety of the office and home) need even more protection than 'desktop' equipment.



Switch on PIN/password protection/fingerprint recognition for mobile devices.



Configure devices so that when lost or stolen they can be **tracked, remotely wiped or remotely locked**.



Keep your devices (and all installed apps) up to date, using the 'automatically update' option if available.



When sending sensitive data, don't connect to public Wi-Fi hotspots - use 3G or 4G connections (including tethering and wireless dongles) or use VPNs.



Replace devices that are no longer supported by manufacturers with up-to-date alternatives.

Preventing malware damage

You can protect your charity from the damage caused by 'malware' (malicious software, including viruses) by adopting some simple and low-cost techniques.



Use antivirus software on all computers and laptops. **Only install approved software** on tablets and smartphones, and prevent users from downloading third party apps from unknown sources.



Patch all software and firmware by promptly applying the latest software updates provided by manufacturers and vendors. Use the 'automatically update' option where available.



Control access to removable media such as SD cards and USB sticks. Consider disabling ports, or limiting access to sanctioned media. Encourage staff to transfer files via email or cloud storage instead.



Switch on your firewall (included with most operating systems) to create a buffer zone between your network and the Internet.

Avoiding phishing attacks

In phishing attacks, scammers send fake emails asking for sensitive information (such as bank details), or containing links to bad websites.



Ensure staff don't browse the web or check emails from an account with Administrator privileges. This will reduce the impact of successful phishing attacks.



Scan for malware and change passwords as soon as possible if you suspect a successful attack has occurred. **Don't punish staff** if they get caught out (it discourages people from reporting in the future).



Check for obvious signs of phishing, like **poor spelling and grammar**, or **low quality versions** of recognisable logos. Does the sender's email address look legitimate, or is it trying to mimic someone you know?

Using passwords to protect your data

Passwords - when implemented correctly - are a free, easy and effective way to prevent unauthorised people from accessing your devices and data.



Make sure all laptops, MACs and PCs use encryption products that require a password to boot. Switch on **password/PIN protection or fingerprint recognition** for mobile devices.



Use two factor authentication (2FA) for important websites like banking and email, if you're given the option.



Avoid using predictable passwords (such as family and pet names). Avoid the most common passwords that criminals can guess (like *password*).



Do not enforce regular password changes; they only need to be changed when you suspect a compromise.



Change the manufacturers' default passwords that devices are issued with, before they are distributed to staff.



Provide secure storage so staff can write down passwords and keep them safe (but not with the device). Ensure staff can reset their own passwords, easily.



Consider using a password manager. If you do use one, make sure that the 'master password' (that provides access to all your other passwords) is a strong one.

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For more information go to www.ncsc.gov.uk @ncsc

SENS KERNEWEK - AN INNOVATIVE COMMUNAL LEARNING EXPERIENCE

"In the spirit of 'The Saints Way', Sens Kernewek is designed to be an innovative, communal learning experience, to 'equip the saints for the work of ministry' here in Cornwall with a clear focus on training people for local church leadership.

Those who take part in Sens Kernewek will be equipped to lead an individual church as part of collaborative clusters or groups. They will be responsible for leading the faithful in mission, worship and service within a specific local community, under the oversight of an incumbent or parish priest. It is a community of women and men exploring a call to local church leadership. Everything we do in Sens Kernewek is based on the description of the very earliest church in Acts 2:42, who 'devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer'.



If you could share this information with your colleagues who hold leadership roles in your parish such as Churchwardens. If someone is interested in joining the Sens Kernewek community, journeying with others who are seeking God's will for their lives they can find more information and an application form on the website [here](http://www.senskernewek.org).

CYBER SECURITY

Most of us use computers now and we know the threat of viruses and other dangers but do you know how to minimise the risks to you and your PCC?

The National Cyber Security Centre has a small charity guide ([here](http://www.ncsc.gov.uk/charity)) which explains how to do the most important things: back up your data; protect from viruses and criminals trying to get your data; and using good passwords.

NETWORK FOR ADMINISTRATORS?

We are exploring the idea of developing a support network for parish administrators. This could be for volunteers and paid staff and could include things like training, resource sharing and meet ups. We know there is a lot of common ground, but the role can be an isolated one at times.

If you would be interested to find out more about this or have suggestions, please contact kate.cortez@truro.anglican.org or call 01872 360023.



DON'T FORGET! DIOCESAN SYNOD ELECTIONS 2024

This year there will be elections to the Diocesan Synod.

The register of lay electors includes the lay Deanery Synod Representatives elected by parishes, with the majority being elected at last year's APCMs. However, we would encourage you to take steps to fill any casual vacancies

prior to your APCM, so as to ensure their inclusion on the electorate list.

More information about the Diocesan Synod elections will follow and, in the meantime, we would encourage parishes to consider who may be suitable for election to Diocesan Synod.



PAROCHIAL FEES AND OCCASIONAL OFFICES

This may not be your role, but there is training on Parochial Fees in 2023 for anyone who would find it helpful.

There is also a helpful section on the Church of England website [here](#) which covers many related matters including what the fees are for; clergy expenses,

grave spaces and monuments.

The 2023 fees table can be found [here](#).

You may receive queries about occasional offices, for example about how to reserve a grave space. More information about these is available [here](#).

PARISH RETURN DEADLINES

We contact the registered people for each parish in plenty of time to let them know when the relevant deadlines for the parish returns are – but in case it's you, or you need to nudge the person who does it, these are the deadlines:

January 31 Statistics for Mission (open now for submissions)

June 28 Return of Parish Finance (open now for submissions)

July 31 Energy Footprint tool (open now for submissions)

We are immensely grateful for each of you who assist us with the completion of these returns. Please contact info@truro.anglican.org if you need any assistance with them.

ELECTORAL ROLL NUMBERS

A reminder that by law you do need to inform us of your electoral roll numbers (email lesley.fusher@truro.anglican.org) but you no longer need to complete a form to do this.

Please send us your 2024 Electoral Roll number as soon as possible after your APCM.

LEGAL NEWS

LOCAL AUTHORITY GRANTS

Local government law permits a local authority to use its funding in a way which would be in the interests of and bring benefit to some or all persons living in the area. However, there has been uncertainty over to the extent to which parish and town councils are able to provide financial support to church buildings on the basis that this purpose may not always be beneficial to those living in the area.

The Levelling-Up and Regeneration Act 2023 (which came into force at the end of 2023) will bring clarification to the position, making it clearer that councils can provide financial support to parish churches or other places of worship.

However, we are aware from recent cases brought to the Registry's attention, that councils are themselves struggling financially and therefore, although the 2023 Act will provide clarity from a legal perspective, in reality, councils may not be able to provide this type of support.

LEGAL NEWS

CHURCH REPRESENTATION RULES

In advance of this year's APCM, PCCs should be aware of changes that have recently been made to the Church Representation Rules (CRR).

If, at an APCM, the number of candidates for election as lay representatives is less than the number of places to be filled, anyone entitled to attend the APCM may seek a vote to confirm the election of each candidate. If such a vote is sought at the meeting and the meeting agrees (by majority) then a vote must be held in respect of each candidate on whether (or not) they should be elected. Therefore, where there are more seats to be filled than candidates, there will not necessarily be an automatic assumption that the individuals standing for election should take up a position as a lay representative of the PCC.

Also, where a candidate is elected as a lay representative, there is now a requirement for them to

make a declaration that they are not disqualified under the CRR from acting as a result of being an employee of the National Church Institutions, being included in a barred list under the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, being convicted of a violent offence against a child or being disqualified as a charity trustee. A failure for an individual to make a declaration would result in them losing their seat. It is therefore very important that elected lay representatives are asked to make the declaration as soon as possible after the election. We would also recommend as a matter of good governance that all PCC members are regularly asked to make the declaration.

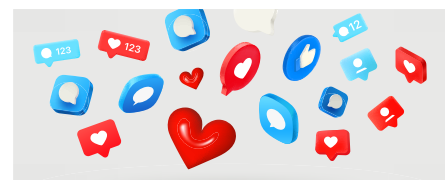
The updated CRR also make a small change to the form of notice of the APCM. Please therefore ensure that when giving notice of your APCM you use the updated template form M1 issued by Church House.

CHARITY COMMISSION GUIDANCE ON SOCIAL MEDIA

Some PCCs will make use of social media in order to reach parishioners and other beneficiaries of their church(es). Where a PCC is using social media, it must have in place a policy which is communicated with its staff (if applicable), volunteers and PCC members. This is a requirement of new guidance issued by the Charity Commission.

The Commission acknowledges that "social media can be a powerful communication tool for charities, to raise awareness and funds and to better engage beneficiaries. It can help charities reach a much wider audience, much more quickly than traditional methods of communication". However there are risks in the use of social media and PCC members must ensure that steps are taken to protect the PCC's reputation and its best interests are promoted.

We recommend that PCCs, especially those already using social media, read and act on the Charity Commission's



guidance. For those PCCs who need to put in place a policy, the Charity Commission has helpfully provided example policies to help guide charities.

In addition, the Charity Commission requests that charities (including PCCs) put in place guidelines to deal with individual social media usage. For example, where PCC members are using social media in their personal capacity and their posts are associated with the PCC, there is potentially a risk to the PCC's reputation.

If a PCC is concerned about its use (or proposed) use of social media in connection with its activities or has any questions on the Charity Commission's guidance, please get in touch with the Registry.

CHANGES TO THE CHARITIES ACT 2011

The Charities Act 2022 (the Act) is currently being brought into legal effect in stages. The Act aims to reduce unnecessary bureaucracy so it should save charities, including PCCs, both time and money. It covers a broad range of topics but the focus of this update is to inform PCCs of the changes to the current law on the disposal of charity land.

When PCCs dispose of their land (often by way of a sale or lease) they will need to ensure that they comply with certain legal requirements set out in the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956 and also the Charities Act 2011.

Some changes to the 2011 Act have already been brought into effect. These include, importantly, a widening of the pool of advisors able to provide advice to a charity (including PCCs) on the proposed disposal. Previously only certain qualified surveyors were able to provide the advice needed, but the group of advisors now includes professionals such as certain estate agents. It is also possible for the advisor providing the report to be a member, officer or employee of the PCC (provided they have the required qualifications) if a PCC is fortunate enough to have such links.

A key change which is due to come in to effect in early 2024 is clarification that certain statements must be included in both the contract for the disposal as well as the document effecting the disposal. It is very important that legal advisors instructed by a PCC to advise in relation to a disposal of PCC property ensure that these statements are included in all required documentation.

NEXT STEPS VIDEO

Alex O'Byrne, Programme Manager, has recorded this **video** to help you find out more about deanery plans and Next Steps on the Way. You can find the deanery plans **here**.