

## DIOCESAN BOARD OF PATRONAGE



Church patronage has a long history in the life of the church. Patronage is the right to put forward a person to take up a particular type of Clergy post: - to 'present' a person to Church of England benefice\* (sometimes known as the 'living'). The candidate is then appointed ('instituted' to the benefice) by the Bishop.

Technically, patronage is a property right which may be transferred, but not sold. The historic root of much patronage lay with the ownership of land and arrangements whereby the Bishop may place a priest at a place when housing and maintenance have been provided. The historic complexity of the legal position has been simplified by the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986.

Under the 1986 Measure, the Diocesan Registrar keeps a register of patrons - those with rights to present to benefices - in practice these can be individuals, colleges, trusts, patronage societies (reflecting particular church backgrounds or theological positions), the Crown, the Diocesan Bishop, the Diocesan Board of Patronage itself, colleges, trusts and private individuals.

When a vacancy occurs, the appointment's process established by the 1986 Measure involves a notice procedure and the drawing up a statement of the conditions, needs and tradition of the parish (at parish level) and of the needs of the diocese and the wider interests of the church (by the Bishop).

The Diocesan Board of Patronage holds the right of patronage in relation to certain parishes in the Diocese, and meets to act as and when necessary.

*"A benefice is the legal and corporate form of clergy post that carries with it responsibility for a parish or parishes (i.e. not an assistant post)." (Drawn from Mark Hill's Ecclesiastical Law 1995)*

## Terms of Reference

The functions of the Diocesan Board of Patronage are set out in the Patronage (Benefices) Measure 1986. Principally:-

- (i) To acquire, hold and transfer any right of patronage
- (ii) To exercise any right of presentation

### (a) Membership

Membership is set out in Schedule 3 of the 1986 Measure

#### Ex Officio

- The Bishop (The Bishop may appoint the Suffragan as his alternate)

- The Archdeacon of the Archdeaconry who shall hold the Patronage portfolio for his Archdeaconry on the BDC.
- The Rural Dean of the Rural Deanery

#### **Elected by the relevant Houses of Diocesan Synod**

- 3 clergy members
- 5 lay members

The Board elects one of its members other than the bishop to be the chairman of the Board.

### **How to become an elected member**

The clerical and lay members are elected by the separate Houses of the Diocesan Synod. Those eligible for election are:

1. Any Clerk in Holy Orders beneficed in or licensed to any parish in the Diocese is eligible to stand for election to the Board. Archdeacons in the Diocese are not qualified to be elected.
2. Any lay person aged 16 + and a communicant member of the Church of England is eligible to stand for election to the Board.

Candidates must be nominated and seconded by qualified electors on the form that is issued when an election is taking place.

Elections which are by single transferable vote are for 6 years (beginning 2021).

Anyone elected to fill a casual vacancy shall hold office only for the unexpired portion of the term of office (in this case up to 2027).

### **Being a member**

In reality, this body meets very infrequently, perhaps only once a year, and this can be online. It is sometimes consulted by email instead.