

## SUSPENSION OF PRESENTATION

### INTRODUCTION

In the Church of England, priests are appointed to a *benefice*, which can be a single parish or a group of parishes. Every benefice has a Patron. Historically, it was the Patron who appointed and paid for the priest (the incumbent). Patrons still exist and retain the right of 'presenting' a priest to the Diocesan Bishop for appointment, but the Area Bishop, Archdeacon and the PCC are now also involved in the process.

### WHAT IS 'SUSPENSION' OF PRESENTATION?

The Diocesan Bishop may decide to 'suspend' temporarily the patron's right to present an incumbent and, instead, following consultation, appoint a priest to be in charge of the parish(es). The Diocesan Bishop has the authority to do this under the Mission and Pastoral Measure 2011.

### WHY IS PRESENTATION SUSPENDED?

The Diocesan Bishop is only able to suspend for certain reasons, and after consultation with the Episcopal Area Mission and Pastoral Committee. Usually, he suspends because of the possibility of future pastoral reorganisation i.e. changing the current grouping of benefices or parishes or the responsibilities of the clergy serving them. (Proposals for any change are always subject to a separate process of consultation.) The suspension can be for up to five years in the first instance, but may sometimes need to be extended if it has not been possible to agree and put in place arrangements for pastoral reorganisation within five years.

### SUSPENSION PROCESS

When a suspension, or extension to a suspension, is recommended, the Diocesan Bishop must consult with the PCC(s), the patron(s), the Area Dean and the Deanery Lay Chair (collectively called the 'interested parties'). This consultation is organised by the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Secretary. The interested parties will be asked to comment on the recommendation, and, if it wishes, the PCC can request a meeting with the Diocesan Bishop or his representative. Once all interested parties have responded to the consultation, the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Secretary will send the responses to the Diocesan Bishop who will then decide whether to suspend or not. If suspension is agreed, formal notices will be sent to the interested parties.

### WHAT WILL THIS MEAN TO US AS A BENEFICE/PARISH?

The distinction between an incumbent and priest in charge is largely technical and legal. From the parish's point of view, the functions carried out by both are the same. When appointing a priest in charge, the Area Bishop will consult the PCC in a procedure that mirrors the process for appointing an incumbent. It is often the case, following pastoral reorganisation, that the priest in charge is named as incumbent.

### FURTHER INFORMATION

If you require any further information about suspensions please contact either your Archdeacon or Deborah Thorley, the Diocesan Mission and Pastoral Assistant on [deborah.thorley@leeds.anglican.org](mailto:deborah.thorley@leeds.anglican.org) or 0113 3530 273.